What is claimed:

1. A method of treating a patient having a tissue that is subject to an ischemic event, comprising: parenterally administering a formulation comprising a halogenated volatile anesthetic to the patient in an amount effective to improve the tissue's resistance to or tolerance of the ischemic event.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the formulation administered further comprises an emulsification adjuvant and an emulsifier.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the formulation administered to the patient is sub-anesthetic.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the tissue is selected from heart, brain, vasculature, gut, liver, kidney and eye.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the ischemic event is selected from aortic aneurysm repair, multiple trauma, peripheral vascular disease, renal vascular disease, myocardial infarction, stroke, sepsis and multi-organ failure.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the amount of the formulation administered is sub-anesthetic.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration is conducted prior to the ischemic event.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration is conducted concomitantly with the ischemic event.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration is conducted after the ischemic event.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration comprises bolus administration of the formulation.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration comprises continuous infusion of the formulation.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the halogenated volatile anesthetic is selected from the group consisting of desflurane, isoflurane, enflurane, halothane and sevoflurane.

13. A method of treating a patient having myocardial tissue that is subject to an ischemic event, comprising: parenterally administering a formulation comprising a halogenated volatile anesthetic to the patient in an amount effective to improve the myocardial tissue's resistance to or tolerance of the ischemic event.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the formulation administered further comprises an emulsification adjuvant and an emulsifier.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the amount of the formulation administered is sub-anesthetic.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the ischemic event is selected from the group consisting of angioplasty, coronary artery bypass surgery, cardiac catheterization and unstable angina.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the halogenated volatile anesthetic is selected from the group consisting of desflurane, isoflurane, enflurane, halothane and sevoflurane.

18. A method of treating a patient having myocardial tissue that is subject to a myocardial infarction, comprising: parenterally administering a formulation comprising a halogenated volatile anesthetic to the patient in an amount effective

to improve the myocardial tissue's resistance to or tolerance of the myocardial infarction.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the amount of the formulation administered is a sub-anesthetic effective amount.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the administration is conducted by i.v. administration.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the halogenated volatile anesthetic is selected from sevoflurane, enflurane and isoflurane.

22. A method of treating a patient having neuronal tissue that is subject to an ischemic event, comprising: parenterally administering a formulation comprising a halogenated volatile anesthetic to the patient in an amount effective to improve the neuronal tissue's resistance to or tolerance of the ischemic event.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the amount of the formulation administered is sub-anesthetic.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein the ischemic event is selected from the group consisting of aortic aneurysm repair, carotid endarterectomy, cerebral arteriography, stroke, impending stroke and transient ischemic attacks.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein the halogenated volatile anesthetic is selected from the group consisting of desflurane, isoflurane, enflurane, halothane and sevoflurane.